

On a spiritual journey with Winch

Madeleine Winch, Beaver Galleries, Deakin, until Monday.

IN 1975 painter and printmaker Madeleine Winch lived for a year on the Greek island of Paros. She would travel to Greece many times, but it is memories of that time and place, rekindled by her reading of writer Charmian Cliff's account of her life in similar circumstances.

Agean Journey is a large exhibition of some 31 prints, monoprints and collographs, notable for their rich textures and deep colours, the blue, ochre and green of sea, earth and vegetation. Winch takes us on a spiritual journey, evoking a sense of place. As in her earlier works in which she addressed domestic and human relationships, the head or figure of a woman frequently occurs.

It is not intended as a self-portrait, but rather as a metaphor for every woman, embodying the feminine sensibility.

In seven collographs the form of an amphora against a pristine white surface is embellished with various figurative motifs such as patterns of leaves, fish, a woman swimming in the sea. On close inspection, one can take in the detailed surface marks



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that emulate stony surfaces. The amphora itself becomes a container of memories, just as the shards of broken pottery in several works suggest others that are lost and fragmented.

The three monoprints, each made up of nine small segments are not unlike pages from a diary or a letter. *The Sea Within* struck me as particularly beautiful. Here again much of its beauty is in the detail. In images where the woman is more prominent, such as *The Island* and *The Island II*, Winch uses a situational convention, familiar from earlier works, which struck me as more romantic in this particular context. The results are quite arresting and even decorative, in the best possible sense of the word.



SPIRITUAL: Madeleine Winch's *The Island II* (detail), 2005. Winch takes people on a journey, evoking a sense of place.